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Lomé, 06 May 2021

Mr. President,

**Urgent Action: Brutal repression against protestors in Colombia**

The African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) strongly condemns the brutal repression against the Colombian people who have exercised their right to freedom of expression against the tax reform bill and the anti-social policies of your government.

According to information we have received, a vicious military escalation has taken place in which state repressive agencies – the National Police and the Mobile Anti-Riot Squad (ESMAD) – social cleansing groups and plainclothes police officers with the help of the army have intimidated, persecuted, repressed, injured and murdered, not only union and social leaders, but indiscriminately targeting at the general population.

To date, according to reports from different human rights organizations, there have been more than 1089 cases of violence, 726 arbitrary detentions, 28 protestors killed, 234 wounded, 5 demonstrators disappeared, 12 people with ocular mutilation and rape of 6 women by the ESMAD.

The announcement of the withdrawal of the tax reform bill is a triumph of the massive social protest and citizen mobilization, but it does not satisfy the demands of the Colombian people, because since then your government has proposed the immediate presentation of another bill, through methods that are still unclear.

For this reason, we support the continuity of the strike and peaceful mobilizations in line with the decisions of the National Strike Committee (Comité Nacional del Paro) and multiple social organizations that accompany it.

We support the legitimate demands of the Colombian people for:

- The demilitarization of the urban areas and cities.
- The dismantling of ESMAD.
- Punishment for those responsible for the brutal repression against the demonstrations.
- Guarantees for the right of peaceful protest.

- Start of negotiations over the Unified Emergency Plan with the National Strike Committee.

Your sincerely,



**Kwasi Adu-Amankwah**  
**General Secretary**